

## *Recognizing & Preventing Inhalant Abuse*

### **Inhalants are:**

- Among the first substances abused by children
- The third most popular drug among pre-teens
- The fourth most abused substance by high school students (behind alcohol, cigarettes, and marijuana)

Inhalants are extremely DEADLY and can cause Sudden Sniffing Death Syndrome. Inhaling can also cause permanent brain damage, loss of muscle control, and destruction of the heart, liver, kidneys, blood and bone marrow.

What kinds of substances do kids inhale or "huff"?

More than 1,000 common household products are commonly inhaled to get "high" such as:

- Glue & adhesives
- Nail polish remover
- Typewriter correction fluid
- Propane gas
- Paints
- Household cleaners
- Cooking sprays
- Deodorants
- Aerosol whipping cream

Signs that kids are sniffing or "huffing" inhalants:

- Unusual items in their rooms, paint when they are not painting, furniture polish when they never dust, large amounts of glue, or empty aerosol cans, etc.
- Lunch bags or plastic bags (used to concentrate the odor)
- Unusual behavior: dazed, intoxicated, or easily agitated

It is VERY difficult for someone to stop "huffing" after they start due to the user's addiction, cognitive impairment, and high relapse rate so the key to stopping inhalant abuse is EDUCATION.

EDUCATION should be age-appropriate and should include:

- Techniques to boost self-esteem
- Ways to resist peer pressure
- Information about the dangers of drug abuse

The EDUCATION should NOT be a "how-to" course or include information on the newest "trendy" drugs to abuse.

### **To find out more information on inhalants, please contact:**

The National Inhalant Prevention Coalition  
800-269-4237  
Fax: 512-480-8953  
[www.inhalants.org](http://www.inhalants.org)